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ABSTRACT

This book encourages the inclusion of persons with disabilities in ongoing adventure programs, motivates adventure leaders to learn more about people with disabilities, and assists specialists in advocating for integrated adventure programming. Centered on attitudinal awareness, the book encourages practitioners to want to make their services accessible, not just to react to legislative mandates. Three main ideas presented are that empowerment is the most effective process for facilitating personal growth of all people, that the traditional "clinical/medical model" of specialist training is incomplete, and that the principles behind adventure learning require the encouragement of independence and self-discovery among all participants. Section one describes how individuals with disabilities have been treated throughout history, the factors that have moved our society towards integration, a brief history of accessible adventure programs, rationale for integration, legislative realities, and problems with labeling. Section two presents an overview of exceptionality with implications for adventure leaders and discusses specific disabilities, with recommendations for practitioners. The disabilities discussed include mental challenges (intelligence, behavior disorders); physical challenges (cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, spinal cord injuries, amputations, arthritis, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis); and health and sensory challenges (diabetes, asthma, visual impairments, hearing impairments). Section three challenges adventure programmers to assess their own attitudes concerning inclusion, and provides examples of how to make adventure accessible by adapting the goal-setting process, activities, initiative problems, and ropes course elements. Appendices include resources that can foster integrated adventure experiences, attitude awareness surveys, safety considerations, key definitions, and sample resources for training. Contains a bibliography. (TD)